



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

no longer seem daring or revolutionary, but Björnson's expression of them has the power of shocking us into a deeper consciousness. The attack upon the double standard of morality for men and women in "The Gauntlet" may both thrill us and make us think, though the injustice of the two separate codes has become almost a commonplace of speech and writing. So in "Beyond Our Power" we may be disappointed if we expect to find a novel, subtly tragic conception. Few of us are vitally concerned in the question of the possibility of miracles, and our attitude is one of wonder that the failure of a miracle should furnish a tragic crisis. Yet the author puts his thought into terms so poignantly human that in reading his play we pass through the stages of doubt, faith, and disillusion, with some approach to the intensity of an entirely fresh inward experience. A love of the truth for itself gives to Björnson's dramas a positive poetic fervor. Skepticism becomes inspiration, and the pathos of faith, the nobility of doubt, become humanized into motives more appealing than the commoner human sentiments. The dramatist has a trick of startling us by his very simplicity, and his plays develop from conversations threatening to be tedious into situations of unexpected and concentrated, yet quite natural, emotional tension. Such a startling yet natural effect is produced in "Beyond Our Power," when the miracle-working pastor brings his children to pray with him at the bedside of his sick wife—an effect so simply and affectingly idyllic that it renders the ensuing tragedy at once convincing and cruel as only the truth can be. As to "The New System," Björnson himself declared that its interest was psychological rather than dramatic. To the reader, however, it is of all the deeper interest because it dwells upon the author's final philosophy of life, laying dramatic stress upon the admonition to "live in truth" that we may advance toward perfection "through a frank acknowledgment of our innermost natures." In all three plays clearness of vision and unequivocally forceful expression result in esthetic pleasure. The white light that illuminates every detail of thought or action to the point of producing an effect of bareness does not, however, destroy human interest. The dialogue—so unlike what any one might be expected to say, so exactly like what human beings do actually think and feel—is as fascinating as a new language. On the whole, we shall not read Björnson for the sake of the intellectual excitement which new ideas produce in us, but we shall read him because he makes what seem the coldest conclusions of skepticism or common sense warm with human significance.

THE FARMER OF TO-MORROW. BY FREDERICK IRVING ANDERSON. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913.

There is both commercial common sense and sound analysis of scientific fact in this book, which has an important bearing upon the so-called "back-to-the-land" movement. Commercially, the point of emphasis is the fact, made clear in a variety of ways, that the farmer of to-day cannot compete with the farmer of yesterday. Scientifically, the book shows that the soil is in no real danger of exhaustion, despite much current teaching to the contrary.

Farming, Mr. Anderson shows, is to all intents a subsidized industry.

The farmer of yesterday paid little or nothing for the land—his plant. In large part the land was originally a gift from the government. Not only has he no interest to reckon upon an original investment, but his land has increased greatly in value. Now that the government has no more land to give away, the city dweller who would go back to the land finds that the amount of capital demanded is great and that the returns are relatively small. As yet business farming cannot compete successfully with the old order of things.

Increased efficiency is not the key to the problem. A few years ago potato-growers in Maine became so efficient that they were forced to sell out at eleven cents a bushel. "The so-called 'intelligent culture,'" declares the author, "is of no more use to the farmer than his bootstraps would be to pull him out of the mire. Until the world is hungry enough to finance the farmer, or until the middlemen give him more than thirty-five cents of the consumer's dollar, text-book farming will remain a dogma and nothing more."

What then is the prospect for the farmer of to-morrow? "He must either speed up the rate of production on fat, highly capitalized corn-belt acres by means of an additional expenditure of capital, or else look about him for raw, non-producing land, upon which to expend his labor to fit it as a competitor of the fat acres which are beyond his means." As a "gleaner" he will find his chief opportunity. Drainage will add to the farmer's "floor space" an ultimate area as large as the whole of France. Irrigation—which, however, requires considerably more capital—will add about fifty million acres—an area larger than the State of New York. Much may be accomplished by the selection of crops which are able to thrive on arid land. Finally the gleaner will find a field for his activities in the wooded territory in the north of the corn-belt regions—notably in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota.

He will not use expensive methods of intensive culture, yet he will profit by an increase of scientific knowledge. "Specialization"—the adaptation of crops to the individual characteristics of his land—will be his greatest aid. The Department of Agriculture is even now endeavoring to supply him with the equivalent of that traditional knowledge which is the most effective tool of the European farmer. It is, so to speak, "manufacturing tradition in pill form." To sum up, "the maximum efficiency of the plant of the American farmer will be attained when the last refractory acre is reclaimed and each individual acre is devoted to the type of agriculture bringing the maximum returns."

Whatever may be the economic conditions which the farmer of to-morrow must face, he need not dread the ultimate exhaustion of the soil. While it is true that experts who have followed in the path of Liebig and accepted his theories unhesitatingly declare that the soil "wears out," the researches of the Bureau of Soils has led to the contrary conclusion. Soils "get tired," it seems—they even produce fatigue poisons which may be isolated in the laboratory—but they do not "wear out." It becomes reasonably clear that the soil is indeed "the one immutable asset of the nation"—that "it can be impaired by use, but never destroyed."

Mr. Anderson has produced a book of large general interest—informing, lively in style, and not too technical.